REMARKS BY MR. KIBBLE TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

JUNE 18, 1937

Mr. Chairman, we have been here several times before. I believe you know before we discuss this question of closed shop. Now it is in our opinion that the purpose of asking this is because in your force account, of which this 270 is organized, the employees in that force account are in a state of continual upheaval and unrest, and we believe that with a certain amount of concessions granted us that we can control these men who are in this organization so as to be of assistance to the District. That is not only going to help your work; it is going to be of assistance to us.

As you remember, some time ago there was some trouble in one of the camps. Some of the members of the Board - we were discussing wage negotiations - we were asked to go out there and clean house. On that issue it was felt by the members of that organization, "To what avail?" We thought if we cleaned house it would be of no consequence. The members would be forced to work union and there will be others continually throwing their share of the burden on to the shoulders of other men.

That particular point, of course, has been discussed in quite lengthy terms, including many details and the question of legality. We have also tried in every way that we can to determine, rather, the illegality of the question. So far we haven't been able to find anything illegal about it. However, we, as workers, are not prepared to argue the technicalities of

laws. It is a question of dissatisfaction, the feeling of intimidation. We feel that we are organizing ourselves for the sole purpose of handling the work of the District. The majority of men on that job have proven themselves, not only in my estimate, but I am sure that it will be agreed, by the Department. The majority of men out there prefer to conduct themselves in a manner respecting law and order and rules and regulations of this District, but that matter has been taken out of our hands. It is a question of arbitration. Our hands are tied. This staff committee was asked to carry on arbitration - their hands were tied.

This question is a serious matter. As you know, there is a great labor movement. We are privileged, we, No. 270, are in that at Banning. You have dealt with us before. We have been well satisfied by the deal, and as long as you already dealt with us and we have to a certain extent come to agreement in a good many ways on this question of closed shop, we feel that some sort of agreement can be brought about whereby it will be of advantage to the Metropolitan Water District to lay hands on this labor question. The question of organized labor. The question of the labor movement and internal fighting between the two. We are willing to cooperate in every way we possibly can. We know for a certain fact that the majority of the men want to abide by the rules and regulations laid down as near as possible and is fair and just. That fact is running in our minds that it will be to the advantage of the District to grant us some sort of an agreement to take care of the element that is amiss that

we can't control, that we should have something to say about it.

However, in the mind of some of you, you are asking about the question of the vote that was taken out there yesterday. I may say that the purpose of that vote was to determine that these negotiations is going forward on the questions in the mind of those men the time the question was brought here in issue - about the attitude that would be taken on this question. Therefore the question was brought up for a vote. However, several days ago we learned an appointment was possible - the possibility of thrashing out - to come down to some sort of a settlement was very possible so actually the vote wasn't official.

I suppose you say that the results were of no avail. The results of that vote showed us one thing - that definitely there is an effort on the part of someone or some group of men in charge to enter into a form of discrimination. We have actual proof. You can believe this or not that one of the superintendents of one of the camps instructed one of his men to go through the tunnel to try to persuade these men to vote against this question. That only brings out the point, especially in our mind, that this is just a constant source of unrest. The men don't know where they stand. We have an element with us that we can't do anything about, and I feel we should be able to come to you and ask for fair consideration, and when that consideration comes up, it puts before us intimidation from groups which has shown continual unrest. It brings about that there are other labor organizations who would be more than glad to jump at the excuse of doing what they could between the two organizations.

However you have dealt with us, we have been satisfied with the deal, and the workers have requested we try to clarify the question of these men among us who we feel have no right to be there. And we have a right to say, we as men working with them, to say this man is not doing his share as business men question the efficiency of the work. So I question the efficiency of those workmen to the respect are they going to create with us unrest or are they giving you a fair deal and are these men, not in our organization, are they going to respect our policies and principles definitely, or we don't want them.

As I said, before your Department heads would be the question of whether the majority of the men prove to be fair and just. You will find this to be the case. Some form of regulation of handling these difficulties we feel must be brought to a head. The advantage of that, while certain demands and requests, if granted, would be signed by this Board, there is the other side of the question - certain requests and demands would be requireable to cover its employees out there who would also be included in those demands. It would be our policy to say it would be a contract we would have to live up to. In our estimate while we don't want any labor friction or any other labor organization coming in to disrupt - we already proved what percentage we represent - we have a right to protect ourselves. We ask that if it is within your findings that this thing be given consideration, that it would be given thought, even to the extent of a committee being appointed to go into these questions with us. There are some things possibly that we might stand a little in doubt;

however, most of our points and requests are pretty well set off.

So, as I said, if it is the finding of this Board to feel that you could take into consideration a settlement of this question, we believe it is in our estimate that that should be an opportune time with this organization, the Metropolitan Water District, to grasp this situation and cinch it down once and for all. Lord knows we want it just as badly as you do.